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HINDOO LACES AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

The hand-woven, hand-dyed, and hand-embroidered textiles exhibited in the East India pavilion at the World's Fair were, to the artistic eyes of women and artists, a splendid revelation of decorative possibilities. The machine-made imitations from Manchester might have seemed as beautiful to the masses, but the eye of the trained critics found an individuality and a soft blending of colors and weird designs in the hand-wrought fabrics which no machinery can duplicate.

The Indian weaver and dyer lives where human life and labor are most superabundant and cheap, and time almost valueless. He is an illiterate man; and all the rôles of his art, all the minutiae of web and woof, all the secrets of his dye-pots, all the formulæ for his fabrics and designs, are oral traditions memorized and repeated in a monotonous sing-song as he performs the prescribed manipulations in his slow, careful, and absorbed manner. In a wide sense he is a machine.

You would think him performing some mystical religious rite as you hear him singing his directions to himself while preparing his various dyes, or twisting around his cloth the knots and wreaths of thread that are to shield it in spots from the dye and produce the wonderful pattern of his dream after a succession of plunges in the different colors. The beautiful lace dye is made of myriads of minute insects and never fades. The printing of silks and cottons by means



THE TOILET
By Mary Cassatt

of hand-blocks is another Indian industry, producing prints artistically superior to any machine-printing, bearing an individual impress.

While the men do this exquisite weaving and coloring, the elaborate and much-admired embroideries of India are the work of women. The designs and stitches are handed down as a precious heritage from mother to daughter, and the expert can easily tell where each product hails from. This is especially the case with respect to the Phulcarri patterns which form part of the bridal outfit and dowry of the Hindoo



THE CARESS

By Henry Salem Hubbell

woman. The silken petticoats embroidered for the daughters of the Raj-puts are often used in decorative arrangements with great effect.

The metal-wrought woolen fabrics that were shown are used as table-spreads or saddle-covers, and the refined gold used in them is untarnishable. The subdued and blended coloring of these textiles makes them invaluable for harmonizing stronger tints in decoration. The province of Scind sent many fine embroideries to the World's Fair. The designs were curious conventionalized peacocks and mythical animals. The indigo textiles generally wrought with gold or scarlet thread were curious demonstrations of Oriental taste; tiny circular pieces of mica-like small mirrors being applied on the fabric with silk here and there.

A. B. GRAFTON.